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By 
Brandy Lynn Belony

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor : Masaaki OKA
Filed : December 9, 2003
For : METHOD AND APPARATUS...
Serial Number : 10/730,881

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

May 9, 2006

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

SIR:

In order to comply with discretionary regulations 37 CFR §§ 1.97 and 1.98, attached hereto is a copy of Form PTO-1449 and copies of the non-US documents (if any) listed thereon. These documents contain information which the Examiner may consider to be important in deciding whether to issue a patent in the instant application.

Attached is a copy of a Communication pursuant to Article 96(2) EPC dated March 9, 2006 from corresponding European Patent Application Number 03 028 249.5-2223. All of the references cited in this document were submitted in an IDS filed on August 11, 2005 and an IDS filed on August 11, 2004.

The present Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted in compliance with 37 § CFR 1.56 as an Examiner might consider any cited document important in deciding whether to allow the application to issue as a patent, but the citation of each document is not to be construed

as an admission that such document is necessarily relevant or prior art. No representation is intended that the cited documents represent the results of a complete search, and it is anticipated that the Examiner in the normal course of examination, will make an independent search and will determine the best prior art consistent with 37 CFR 1.104 (a), and in the course of such search will review for relevance every document cited on the attached form even if not initialed.

Each item of information contained in this information disclosure statement was first cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement.

As this statement is being filed prior to issuance of a first Office Action, no fee is due. However, any fee determined to be due with this statement may be charged to Deposit Account 50-1290.

Early and favorable consideration is respectfully solicited.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian E. Hennessey
Reg. No. 51,271

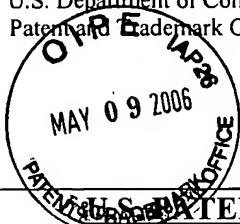
Customer Number: 026304
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1449/PTO

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**

Sheet 1 of 1



U.S. Department of Commerce
Patent and Trademark Office

Application No. : 10/730,881

Filing Date

First Named Inventor: : M. OKA

Group Art Unit

Examiner Name

Attorney Docket No. : SCEP 20.778

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

FOREIGN DOCUMENTS

Other Prior Art-Non Patent Literature Documents

Examiner Initials	Cite No.	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc.), date, page(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, country, where published, source.	Applicant check here if English language translation attached
		Communication pursuant to Article 96(2) EPC from corresponding European Patent Application Number 03 028 249.5-2223, dated March 9, 2006	
Examiner Signature		Date Considered	

Examiner: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw a line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

[Redacted] India is requested consider which of its citizens is in compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 201 and the requirements of the Patent Act.
“Unique citation designation number.” See attached Kinds of U.S. Patent Documents.¹ Enter Office that Issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3).² For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document.³ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.1 if possible.⁴ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached.Burden Hour Statement. This form is estimated to take 2 hours to complete. Time will vary depending upon the needs of the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you are required to complete this form should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of Information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. DO NOT SES- FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231.